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are not to receive the fixed interest and regard of the Christian,—pray tell me, what are to do it? “Thy Commandment, O God, is exceeding broad.” As to anything objectionable in the way of excitement which may attend those subjects, that depends much upon one’s self. The more true and comprehensive view of religion we deem to be that which embraces the subject of reform, and that regards Christianity in its application to existing evils and abuses.

We know of no one who entertained a higher conception of the truth in this matter than the late Dr. Channing. He was one who sought an application of his religion in all the various aspects of life and duty.

THE LATE BATTLES IN INDIA.

[From the Stamford (Eng.) Mercury, of May 15, 1846.]

A Letter from Private John Lunn, of the 80th Regiment, to his father, of St. Leonard’s-street, Stamford, dated from the Camp before the Lahore, on the 8th of March, relates some incidents connected with the battles on the banks of the Sutlej, which have not hitherto been published. The following are extracts:—“On the 8th of December, our regiment marched from Umbollah to Moodkee, a distance of 150 miles; and on the 13th, in the evening, after a fatiguing day’s march, we were engaged for the first time: the battle commenced at four o’clock, and lasted till ten, when we were marched back to our camp, having sustained a loss of only seven killed, and ten wounded. On the 19th there was no fighting. On the 20th we started in pursuit of the enemy, and came up with them at four o’clock, when the British forces formed for action, and engaged, the contest being carried on till ten the next morning: at that time the enemy retreated, and we thought they had relinquished the contest; but in about an hour after they came down upon us in thousands, severely harassing our comparatively small force: we however effectually resisted them, and at four o’clock in the afternoon they made a second retreat. *At this time, the weather being excessively hot, and our exertions overpowering, we were drawn up to receive rations and grog, when to our disappointment it was announced that the camel which had borne our grog had been shot, and all had been lost. We then made for the enemy’s camp, and helped ourselves (nearly famished as we were) to the best we could find: all we obtained was flour, with which we made some cakes, and fried them,—glad indeed of anything, hunger and thirst having become almost insupportable: our officers were as badly off as the men, and in fact got nothing but what the soldiers divided with them. On the succeeding morning we commenced hanging and shooting all the prisoners, which dreadful work occupied us nearly the whole of the day. On the 22d we commenced our march towards Ferozepore Plains, which we reached in a few*

days, and then remained quietly in camp for a week."—"On the 10th of February, having received orders to be ready at a minutes notice, we marched out to face the Sikhs, and confronted them at about eight o'clock, *when our big guns cracked about their ears, and their numerous guns about ours*: we soon came to close quarters, and then many a brave man's life departed. A cannon-ball pays no respect to persons: it will kill generals as well as private soldiers: and *when such projectiles are flying about, it is 'every man for himself*;' though, if a soldier does not want to lose the number of his mess, the closer he keeps to his work the safer. *But at such times a curious sensation steals over even the bravest, for no one knows but that the next moment may be his last. At the time I went into the field and heard the roar of the guns, I confess that I felt rather curiously, though I do not consider that I was then, or am now, anything of a coward. It was a horrid sight to see the mangled corpses of friends and foes, to hear the groans of the dying, and the cries for help of the wounded: those who have never seen a field of battle cannot picture its horrors; nor can they know the regret a soldier feels at not being able to assist a wounded comrade. The enemy were strewed in thousands all over the field, and amongst them were to be seen the lifeless bodies of numbers or our brave countrymen.*—I had an opportunity of seeing a great deal more of the carnage than many others, as I was sent out the day after the action to assist in burying the dead, and to bring home the wounded. I am glad to say that we lost comparatively very few of our men, although our regiment was in the thickest of the fight: by dead and wounded, we were deprived of 450: among the latter was Caleb Foreman, a Stamford man, who was twice disabled, but not dangerously." The writer then mentions John Christian, from Stamford, and Samuel Woodward, from Easton, both of whom were in the actions, but received no wound.—Lunn was himself slightly hurt, but had recovered at the time he wrote the letter. A son of Abel Blades lost a leg, (as stated in a former paper,) and at the time of Lunn's writing was in Ferozepore hospital in a state of great suffering, but was expected to rally."

On the incidents recorded in this letter, we offer a few observations:—they expose some parts of the war system rather too plainly for the comfort of its friends;—things are mentioned here which it would be rather inconvenient to insert in "Official Despatches," or introduce into the placards posted at the Horse Guards, to induce "Fine Young Men" to enlist for India;—things which some of the Christian Advocates for "the morality of War," will not, we imagine, be very ready to deal with.

The first thing that strikes our attention is the USE OF STRONG DRINK. "The weather was excessively hot, and the exertions of the men were overpowering; and they were drawn up to receive rations and grog." Under the circumstances here named, strong drink *cannot* be pleaded for as necessary or beneficial. It possesses no medicinal properties to counteract the feverish heats of a hot climate, but must greatly aggravate them; it can do nothing to relieve excessive fatigue, however it may serve to promote a temporary excitement, and force into action a kind of false strength. This however is enough for cruel war. It takes no

thought about the subsequent sufferings of its living machinery, provided only that that machinery can be screwed up to the point necessary for dealing out destruction and death to the content of those who use it. If men can be maddened to rush into the heat of the conflict; if their every thought about the right or the wrong of the action, the present danger and the future consequences, can but be effectually banished, the object of war is gained. Men may perish by thousands, under the influence of strong drink; IT is as regardless of the moral state in which they die, as it is of the fact of their death. All this is quite natural. How should any account be made of the former, where the latter is deliberately and systematically calculated upon? But what shall be said of the practice thus recognized? Does it run through the War system? Is it a part of its systematic arrangements to effect its purposes by the aid of strong drink? To what other conclusion can we come? The recruiting-serjeant obtains his men by drink; the barrack-officer winks at the reeling soldier, as he comes home to his quarters; and the captain in command draws up his regiment in prospect of battle, to receive "rations and grog." So much for the morality of War!

THE PRIVATIONS OF THE SOLDIER next present themselves to view in these extracts. "The camel that bore the grog had been shot, and all had been lost."—They were "nearly famished."—"Hunger and thirst had become almost insupportable." They were literally without supplies. Even what they got by stealing was very inadequate. "The officers were as badly off as the men." A fine practical comment this upon the glowing promises put out at Whitehall, and reiterated by the recruiting-serjeant in every provincial market-place, and in the tap-room of every village beer-shop! Well does the writer of the letter suggest, that war "pays no respect to persons," but that it involves in one common and indiscriminate misery all who are engaged in it! And that misery assumes every possible variety of form. Such records as the one before us may be used to provoke a smile, or point a jest by those who sit quietly at home, enjoying an ordinary measure of comfort; but the facts they relate are terrible realities to those who suffer them. And when does war escape them? If it do not *find* misery and want, it soon *makes* them. Every page of its history corresponds to this one.

Next comes THEFT, further to illustrate the true character of the War system. "We then made," says the writer, "for the enemy's camp, and helped ourselves to the best we could find." What is this but a plain proof that war claims to itself the right of appropriating to its use everything which it needs, to whomsoever it may justly belong? It trains its men to this habit of plunder, and then, when it has so trained them, inflicts upon them a terrible punishment,—perhaps even death itself,—if they venture to indulge the habit without its express permission. Where shall we look for such an authorized combination of all the vices, as the War system presents?

Observe also, the CONFESSIONS which this soldier makes as to the terrible scenes of slaughter which he witnessed; the feelings he experienced, &c. "Our big guns," "cracked about their ears, and their numerous

guns about ours."—"When such projectiles are flying about, it is 'every man for himself.'"—"At such times a curious sensation steals over even the bravest, for no one knows but that the next moment may be his last. At the time I went into the field and heard the roar of the guns, I confess that I felt rather curiously."—"It was a horrid sight to see the mangled corpses of friends and foes, to hear the groans of the dying, and the cries for help of the wounded; those who have never seen a field of battle cannot picture its horrors, nor can they know the regret a soldier feels at not being able to assist a wounded comrade," &c. Look for a moment at these *confessions*. War is here presented to our view as it is,—an effective organization for the destruction of human life. One speaks for all. Selfishness reigns supreme. Inclination to show kindness is afforded no opportunity for gratification. "Curious sensations," whether of fear or desperation, bravado or doubt, levity or serious thoughtfulness, revenge or recklessness, must all yield to the stern destiny which is involved in the word of command. Familiarity with the most terrific scenes—scenes which no language, however vivid, can adequately describe—must be acquired. Here is no place for thought, no time for composure, no motive for prayer; yet it is the place for death, and the hour of judgment. This a system in accordance with Christianity? realizing its solemn revelations, believing its holy promises, obeying its righteous precepts, breathing its benevolent spirit, and cherishing its immortal hopes? Impossible!

But the worst is yet behind—What is said of

THE PRISONERS ?

Now mark! This is a British warfare!—Defensive war! The war which has been so exultingly said to have reflected no discredit on British kindness, but to have been distinguished by a generosity almost unparalleled in the practice of war, and to have succeeded in securing the confidence and admiration of the conquered Sikhs! This is the war for which we have been asked to render thanksgivings to Almighty God, and for which the country has been called upon to vote peerages and titles, pensions and medals! The war which has been said to have the express sanction of the Most High, which has been placed on a level with the primitive inflictions which the Israelites were required to exercise towards the idolatrous nations of Canaan, and to which we have been pointed as God's means of introducing the gospel to the Lahore territory;—We have no language in which to express the horror we feel in directing attention to this monstrous wickedness: let it speak for itself; it describes the soldier's trade; it records the foul disgrace of our country! we blush for our nature, our land, our Christian name; we have but one predominant feeling, and that is that "the God of peace" may in his great mercy forgive the perpetrators of the deed, and all those who by giving him thanks for this war have expressed their sympathy in the deeds that characterize it. Read it then, and remember it is an argument against all war, however "just and necessary" it may be said to be. Such is the nature of the system, that however individuals may deplore many of its facts, it is an utter stranger to all holy and benevolent influences,

whilst it opens the door to every enormity by which cold-blooded revenge may be gratified. It was bad enough to fire a park of artillery upon the drowning, but the prisoners—*oh ! what of them ?*

“ *On the succeeding morning we commenced hanging and shooting all the prisoners, which dreadful work occupied us nearly the whole of the day*” !!! December 21, 1845 !!!

THE DESERTER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ANASTASIUS GRUN.

In the guard-house, pinioned, sits,
The mountain-boy, once glad and free ;
To-morrow muskets seal his doom,
For thrice he ran for liberty.

Now, to solace thoughts of death,
They bring him wine and dainty cheer ;—
More welcome, to his guarded room
Comes his mother old and dear.

“ Mother, see, these foolish men
Would have me break the solemn vow
I gave my lovely mountain-girl,
Kept sacred as my life till now !

“ They tell me that my life is due
To such a noble king as mine—
But good kings, surely, don't want BLOOD,
And mother, sure, my life is THINE.

“ Who will guard your house and field,
And these dear locks of silver-gray,
And Nanny's hair, of golden brown,
When I am buried in the clay ?

“ What foolery ! there they lift a pole,
And on its top a painted rag,
With some wild, savage beast upon 't—
And I must march beneath their flag !

“ Vultures, eagles, carrion-crows,
I hated every ravenous bird,
And shot them, when they ventured near,
When watching by our mountain-herd.

“ And then across an empty tub
They stretch a noisy ass's skin—
Instead of larks and mountain-birds,
My ear is stunn'd with such a din !

“ I'd rather hear the merry fiddle
Play'd by our good old parish-clerk,
At eve when on the mountain-grass
Our maids and shepherds danced till dark.

“ And then they dress me like a fool,
With buckled belt, and shoulder-knot,
A knapsack like a shoulder-hump,
And, for a hat, this great black pot !

“ And I must stand here all night waking,
Forsooth, because my lord is sleeping !
Why, how much sounder sleeps the king,
I'd like to know, for all my keeping ?

“ T'would wiser be to trust himself,
As I must do, to heaven above,
And let me go to stand on guard
Before the cottage of my love !

“ I loathe to die by musket balls—
To-morrow, when my chains are broke,
Think, mother, that, among the hills,
I fell beneath a thunder-stroke !”

The morning came—the mountain-girl
Went to the quiet pasture-ground,
And sat beneath a bloomy tree,
With all her cattle grazing round.

Hark ! a sudden, angry clang,
Shakes the tree above her head,
And startled from its morning-dream,
Its blossoms are around her shed.

And drops of shining dew, like tears,
Are falling fast the maid around,
As, in the vale, her mountain boy
Falls, with his face upon the ground.

JOSEPH COSTICK.